What is claimed is:

1. A computer readable medium on which is embedded computer software, the software comprising:

    a base class that defines a parent-child relationship by which a child object is stored within the storage space of its parent object;

    an inline class, wherein the inline class is an extension of the base class and wherein a member of the inline class is permitted to be a child object but prohibited from being a parent object; and

    a container class, wherein the container class is an extension of the base class and wherein a member of the container class is permitted to be a child object and/or a parent object;

whereby a well-formed document can be modeled in software using members of the inline and/or container classes.

2. The computer readable medium of claim 1 wherein the document is a markup language document.

3. The computer readable medium of claim 2 wherein the markup language is selected from the group consisting of HTML, XML, XHTML and SGML.

4. The computer readable medium of claim 1 wherein the software further comprises:

    an extension of the inline class.

5. The computer readable medium of claim 4 wherein the extension of the inline class corresponds to a document item selected from a group consisting of comment text, formatted text, embedded text, an image, an anchor, a paragraph marker, a line break and a horizontal rule.

1   **6**. The computer readable medium of claim 1 wherein the software further comprises:

2   an extension of the container class.

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4   **7**. The computer readable medium of claim 6 wherein the extension of the container class

5 corresponds to a document item selected from a group consisting of a bold text item, a

6 horizontally centered item, a table, a subdocument and a selection list.

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8   **8**. The computer readable medium of claim 1 wherein the container class corresponds to a

9 document item in which other items can be nested.

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11   **9**. The computer readable medium of claim 1 wherein the software further comprises:

12   an extension to an extension of the inline and/or container classes.

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14   **10**. A method for use in developing a document-producing computer program, the

15 method comprising the step of utilizing a set of classes, the set of classes comprising:

16   a base class that defines a parent-child relationship by which a child object is

17 stored within the storage space of its parent object;

18   an inline class, wherein the inline class is an extension of the base class and

19 wherein a member of the inline class is permitted to be a child object but prohibited from

20 being a parent object; and

21   a container class, wherein the container class is an extension of the base class and

22 wherein a member of the container class is permitted to be a child object and/or a parent

23 object.

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25   **11**. The method of claim 10 wherein the document is a markup language document.

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27   **12**. The computer readable medium of claim 11 wherein the markup language is selected

28 from the group consisting of HTML, XML, XHTML and SGML.

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13. The method of claim 10 wherein the set of classes further comprises:

      an extension of the inline class.

14. The method of claim 13 wherein the extension of the inline class corresponds to a document item selected from a group consisting of comment text, formatted text, embedded text, an image, an anchor, a paragraph marker, a line break and a horizontal rule.

15. The method of claim 10 wherein the set of classes further comprises:

      an extension of the container class.

16. The method of claim 15 wherein the extension of the container class corresponds to a document item selected from a group consisting of a bold text item, a horizontally centered item, a table, a subdocument and a selection list.

17. The method of claim 10 wherein the container class corresponds to a document item in which other items can be nested.

18. The method of claim 10 wherein the set of classes further comprises:

      an extension to an extension of the inline and/or container classes.

19. The method of claim 10 wherein the utilizing step comprises:

      linking to a library containing the set of classes; and

      programmatically invoking an extension of the inline and/or container classes.

20. A computer readable medium on which is embedded a document-producing computer program, the computer program comprising a product of a method, the method comprising the step of utilizing a set of classes, the set of classes comprising:

      a base class that defines a parent-child relationship by which a child object is stored within the storage space of its parent object;

1   an inline class, wherein the inline class is an extension of the base class and

2 wherein a member of the inline class is permitted to be a child object but prohibited from

3 being a parent object; and

4   a container class, wherein the container class is an extension of the base class and

5 wherein a member of the container class is permitted to be a child object and/or a parent

6 object.

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